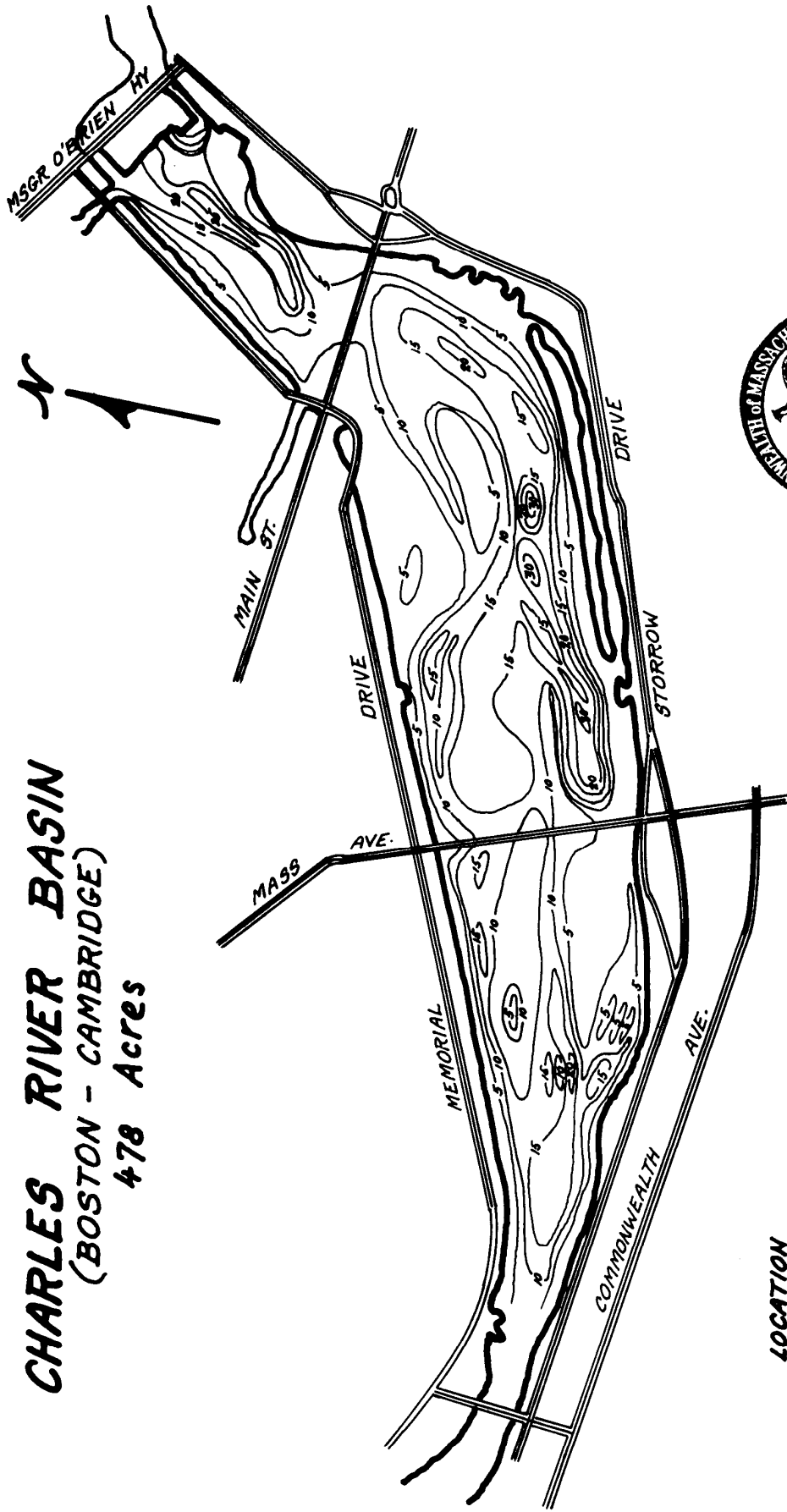


CHARLES RIVER BASIN (BOSTON - CAMBRIDGE) 478 Acres



LOCATION



NOT TO BE USED FOR NAVIGATIONAL PURPOSES

CHARLES RIVER (Middlesex / Norfolk / Suffolk Counties)

General Information:

The Charles River flows 79 miles from Echo Lake in Hopkinton to Boston Harbor. This is a small, mostly warm water river system, which winds its way through a mixture of rural, suburban and urban environments. The best fishing is generally limited to sections of the river impounded by historic milldams. While there are 18 such dams on the river, only ten of them offer significant fisheries. Most of the information offered here is based on a survey of three impoundments: Silk Mill, Cordingly and Moody.

Each of these "pools" have moderate to excellent shore access and at least one site for launching car top boats and canoes (see **Public Access to the Waters of Massachusetts** for detailed maps to some).

Aquatic vegetation is very abundant in backwater and shoreline areas, thanks to the high fertility of the brown water. Transparency is poor; generally three feet or less depending on whether or not recent rainfalls have added to the amount of suspended sediments. Structure is limited to points, inlets and a few sunken docks and piers.

Fish Populations:

Sixteen species were sampled during the last survey in 1981: golden shiner, white perch, black crappie, bluegill, pumpkinseed, brown bullhead, white catfish, white sucker, largemouth bass, chain pickerel, northern pike, yellow perch, yellow bullhead, carp, American eel and redbreast sunfish. Channel catfish have been recorded recently. Upper reaches of the river and its tributaries contain stocked trout.

Fishing:

Charles River impoundments have long been known to support an excellent largemouth bass fishery. The bass here tend to be of large average size and trophies are not uncommon. Pickerel are also of large average size. Regular stockings of northern pike have yielded trophies topping the 20-pound mark, and these fish have become a significant attraction to ice fishermen plying backwater areas when conditions permit. Remember that river ice can be treacherous, with thin areas due to hidden currents.

Panfish are an underutilized resource in the Charles, although they are numerous and have good average size. Perch, crappie and sunfish all offer excellent eating, and the white catfish — some going to four or five pounds — are becoming a favorite of shoreline anglers on warm summer evenings.

The upper reaches of the Charles — from the South Natick Dam to Elm Street in West Medway — are stocked with rainbow trout, brown trout and brook trout every spring. Tributaries such as Royalston Brook in Holliston, Hopping Brook in Medway and the Mill River in Norfolk are also stocked with brook and brown trout in the spring. We have received reliable reports of brown trout holding over from one year to the next, so there is at least a limited amount of trout water in the basin.

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